

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/772,371

Applicant(s)

AOKI ET AL.

Examiner

Art Unit

Hoan H. Tran

2852

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS**. This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to amendment filed 03/15/2006.

2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 6,7,9,11-19,21-24,26,27 and 29-31.

3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some* c) None of the:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.

(a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.

(b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of
Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 6, 7, 9, 11-19, 21-24, 26, 27 and 29-31 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 6, 7, 9, 16/6, 16/7, 16/9, 17 and 18

None of the prior art of record teaches or suggests an image forming method comprising the step of conveying the thin layer of developer formed on the developer carrying member to a development zone facing the latent image carrying member; wherein the developer conveyance member conveys the developer using electrostatic effect to supply the developer to the developer carrying member, and a relationship of $|Vs| > |Vd|$ holds where Vd represents a surface movement velocity of the developer carrying member, and Vs represents a developer conveyance velocity of the developer moving on the developer conveyance member.

Claims 11 and 16/11

None of the prior art of record teaches or suggests an image forming method comprising the step of conveying the thin layer of developer formed on the developer carrying member to a development zone facing the latent image carrying member; wherein a developer charge amount changing means or changing an amount of electrical charge of the developer on the developer carrying member is arranged downstream of the development zone and upstream of the developer supply zone along the surface movement direction of the developer carrying member.

Claims 12-15, 16/12, 16/13, 16/14 and 16/15

None of the prior art of record teaches or suggests an image forming method comprising the step of conveying the thin layer of developer formed on the developer carrying member to a

development zone facing the latent image carrying member; wherein an electrically conductive member for applying a voltage to the developer on the developer carrying member is arranged downstream of the development zone and upstream of the developer supply zone along the surface movement direction of the developer carrying member.

Claims 19, 21-24, 26, 27 and 29-31

None of the prior art of record teaches or suggests an image forming apparatus comprising a supply roller configured to supply the toner from the toner hopper to the electrostatic conveyance member by a rotation; wherein the electrostatic conveyance member comprises a pattern of electrodes configured to set up an electric field along the electrostatic conveyance member, and wherein a toner forms a layer on a surface of the development roller, the toner is applied by an electrical field to the electrostatic latent image on the photoconductive drum, formed a toner image, and wherein the development roller and the photoconductive drum are separated by a gap.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hoan H. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-2141. The examiner can normally be reached from 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Arthur Grimley can be reached at (571) 272-2136. The central office fax number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

HHT
May 01, 2006



HOAN TRAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER